



United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

Public Information Office

David Madden, Manager • (415) 556-6177 • (415) 556-6179 fax • dmadden@ce9.uscourts.gov

Editor's Note: Media coverage of the conference is welcome. Advanced media registration will be required. To register, contact the Public Information Office by July 3, 2006.

NEWS RELEASE

June 19, 2006

Contact: David Madden, (415) 556-6177

Judicial Conference Focuses on Top Issues, Welcomes Justices

HUNTINGTON BEACH – Sentencing guidelines, juror service and disaster planning are among the topics to be discussed during the 2006 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, which will be held July 10-13, 2006, at the Hyatt Regency in Huntington Beach, Calif.

This year's conference features remarks by Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., of the United States Supreme Court, and a presentation by Associate Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, newly designated Ninth Circuit justice. Also participating in the conference will be Associate Justice Stephen G. Breyer and James C. Duff, recently appointed director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

The conference brings together the bench and bar from the federal courts of the western United States. Invitations have been extended to more than 800 judges, judiciary employees, representatives of government agencies, and private attorneys, many of whom not only practice in the federal courts, but also serve on judicially-sponsored committees seeking to improve the administration of justice in the Ninth Circuit.

The theme of the conference is "Seismic Shifts in the Law and in Our Lives." The program includes:

- **Presentation by Associate Justice Anthony M. Kennedy
(Monday, July 10, 9 a.m.)**

The newly designated Ninth Circuit justice will be introduced by Chief Judge Mary M. Schroeder and engage in a discussion with Circuit Judge Consuelo M. Callahan and Merrilee MacLean, Esq., of the Ninth Circuit Advisory Board.

— more —

Office of the Circuit Executive

95 Seventh St. P.O. Box 193939 San Francisco CA 94119-3939

- **You Be the Judge: Balancing the Equities in Sentencing**
(Tuesday, July 11, 8:30 a.m.)
Although the Supreme Court has determined them to be “advisory,” federal sentencing guidelines continue to serve as the framework for most sentencing decisions. Imposing sentence is one of the most difficult and emotionally demanding tasks for any judge. In this interactive segment, audience members will decide sentencing in several hypothetical cases. They will be given two sentencing opportunities: the first based strictly on the offense and sentencing guidelines, the second, based on those factors plus the facts of the case. The exercise is intended to illustrate the dilemma often faced by judges as they try to reconcile the differences between sentencing in the abstract and in the real world.
- **Jury Reform: Making a Great System Better, or Fixing What Isn't Broken?**
(Tuesday, July 11, 10:15 a.m.)
A number of states are involved in testing and incorporating changes to the jury system, an evolving institution in American life. Federal courts are looking at similar ideas to improve jury utilization. Hear panelists offer differing views on what might be done to enable juries to do their jobs more effectively and how fast such profound changes should be made.
- **Breakfast with the Bench – Jury Reform: Are Seismic Changes Warranted?**
(Wednesday, July 12, 8:00 a.m.)
The bench and bar will discuss the presentation the previous day on jury reform. Have we gone too far or not far enough?
- **Giants in the Earth: Current Thinking on Earthquakes, Tsunamis and Volcanoes** (Wednesday, July 12, 10:15 a.m.)
In this, the centennial year of the great San Francisco earthquake, a panel of distinguished scientists will explore advances in our understanding of seismic events. While the ability to predict major impact events remains an elusive, if not ultimately impossible objective, there is much to learn from risk analysis with respect to earthquakes, volcanic activity and tsunamis, and planning measures that have become possible in light of current research findings and study.
- **Disaster Planning: Dealing with the Daze After** (Thursday, July 13, 8:30 a.m.)
Last year, New Orleans and the Gulf Coast were forced to pick up the pieces from Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. Next year, it could be the western states that

– more –

are struck by a different kind of disaster. Every year, thousands of people share a long journey to recovery from tornados, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, fires, or other calamities. Preparation and planning are vital to managing disaster situations for law offices, for courts, and for other public facilities. A panel of speakers will address these issues from personal experience gained in establishing a new "normal" after a disaster.

- **Wellness Program: Oh, My Aching Back! (Thursday, July 13, 10:15 a.m.)**
Did you know that eight out of 10 Americans experience lower back pain during their lives or that back pain is one of the top ten most common reasons for visiting the doctor? Learn from an expert about the cause of low back pain, the impact it can have on you, and how to keep your back strong for life.

- **Conversation with the Chief Justice – Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. (Thursday, July 13, 11:30 a.m.)**
The “Conversation with the Chief Justice” features an informal conversation with Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., who will be attending the Ninth Circuit conference for the first time. Participating in the conversation with Chief Justice Roberts will be Chief District Judge Robert S. Lasnik, program chair for the conference, Magistrate Judge Sandra M. Snyder, chair of the Conference Executive Committee, and Peg Carew Toledo, Esq., chair of the Ninth Circuit Lawyer Representatives Coordinating Committee.

The conference is being organized by a Conference Executive Committee chaired by Magistrate Judge Sandra M. Snyder of Fresno. Chief District Judge Robert S. Lasnik of Seattle chairs the program subcommittee. Ninth Circuit Chief Circuit Judge Mary M. Schroeder will preside over the opening session and participate in other parts of the conference.

The Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference meet pursuant to Section 333 of Title 28 of the United States Code for “the purpose of considering the business of the courts and advising means of improving the administration of justice within such circuit.” The U.S. Courts for the Ninth Circuit consists of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and the district and bankruptcy courts and related court units for the Districts of Alaska, Arizona, Northern California, Central California, Eastern California, Southern California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Eastern Washington, Western Washington, the U.S. Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

#